

Tom Horne
Superintendent

N·E·W·S

ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Contact: Amy Rezzonico, Press Secretary (602) 542-5072

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Tuesday, August 10, 2004

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION SAYS ARIZONA IS AMONG STRONGEST STATES NATIONALLY FOR SUPPORT OF SCHOOL ARTS PROGRAMS

PHOENIX (Tuesday, August 10, 2004) - Arizona schools chief Tom Horne is being touted by the Secretary of Education as a national leader in advocacy for school arts programs.

In a letter to all 50 state school chief officers, and the superintendents of all school districts throughout the country, U. S. Secretary of Education, Rod Paige, stated, in part:

“As I travel the country, I often hear that arts education programs are endangered because of *No Child Left Behind*. This message was echoed in a recent series of teacher roundtables sponsored by the Department of Education. It is both disturbing and just plain wrong.

It’s disturbing not just because arts programs are being diminished or eliminated, but because NCLB is being interpreted so narrowly as to be considered the reason for these actions. The truth is that NCLB included the arts as a core academic subject because of their importance to a child’s education. *No Child Left Behind* expects teachers of the arts to be highly qualified, just as it does teachers of English, math, science, and history.

* * *

There is much flexibility for states and local school districts under the *No Child Left Behind Act* with respect to support for the core subjects. In Arizona, for example, as part of Superintendent Tom Horne’s current “content-rich curriculum” initiative, \$4 million in Comprehensive School Reform (Title I, Part F) funds are supporting arts education at 43 current Comprehensive School Reform schools throughout the state. Additional Arizona arts Education Initiative school sites are being supported with Title V (Innovative Programs) funding under NCLB.”

A copy of the full letter is attached.

###